Trust and Dialogue in the Army Profession

A Monograph
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AY 2008

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE

Form Approved
OMB No. 0704-0188

1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY)	**2. REPORT TYPE**	**3. DATES COVERED** *(From - To)*
22-05-2008	SAMS Monograph	July 2007 – May 2008

4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE
Trust and Dialogue in the Army Profession

5a. CONTRACT NUMBER

5b. GRANT NUMBER

5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER

6. AUTHOR(S)
Major James M. Lewis, III (U.S. Army)

5d. PROJECT NUMBER

5e. TASK NUMBER

5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS)
250 Gibbon Avenue
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2134

8. PERFORMING ORG REPORT NUMBER
SAMS

9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
Command and General Staff College (CGSC)
1 Reynolds Avenue
Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027

10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)
CGSC

11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)

12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT
Approved for Public Release; Distribution is Unlimited

13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES

14. ABSTRACT

Trust is an essential element that forms the core of the professional military ethic. As a foundational concept, trust, from an organizational perspective, facilitates the lasting commitment to meet strategic aims. Trust involves the expectation that the object of trust will behave in a favorable manner, or at least a non-harmful manner, and includes the willingness of a person to be vulnerable to the actions of another based on this expectation. Trust binds the Army together as a cohesive unit. However, internal to the Army profession, defined more directly as the Officer Corps, there is the perception of serious erosion of trust perhaps reaching dangerously dysfunctional levels.

The mechanisms and building blocks for trust revolve around communication and relationships. In order to build relationships that foster trust, one must engage in communication. However, for the Army profession, the concept of communication is misunderstood. More importantly, the Army as a profession does not truly understand the concept of dialogue. This lack of understanding has allowed the perceived erosion of trust amongst the Officer Corps.

This monograph seeks to address this issue by defining trust and the profession. It identifies the source of the perceived trust erosion within the profession. It provides a more complete definition of communication involving the concepts of discourse, dialogue and discussion, emphasizing the use of dialogue. It shows how the Army in attempting to build a learning organization, has failed to include dialogue in its efforts. Finally, this monograph provides recommendations on how the Army profession can seek to rebuild and sustain trust in the future through these concepts.

15. SUBJECT TERMS
Trust, Dialogue, Profession, Officership

16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF: N/A			**17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT**	**18. NUMBER OF PAGES**	**19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON**
					Stefan J. Banach COL, U.S. Army
a. REPORT	**b. ABSTRACT**	**c. THIS PAGE**			**19b. PHONE NUMBER** *(include area code)*
(U)	(U)	(U)	(U)	49	913-758-3302

Standard Form 298 (Rev. 8-98)
Prescribed by ANSI Std. Z39.18

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

MONOGRAPH APPROVAL

MAJ James M. Lewis, III

Title of Monograph: Trust and Dialogue in the Army Profession

This monograph was defended by the degree candidate on 10 April 2008 and approved by the monograph director and reader named below.

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Abstract

Trust and Dialogue in the Army Profession by MAJ James M. Lewis, III, U.S. Army, 41 pages.

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Introduction

With less than one percent of Americans serving in the Armed Forces, one must acknowledge that there may exist a military culture that is disconnected from the American populace as a whole. While it is the sons and daughters of this populace who eventually fill the ranks of the military, once in the military, Soldiers, Sailors, Marines and Airmen become part of something different. They become a part of a highly respected force, whose members willingly sacrifice their lives for the betterment of the other 99 percent of the nation. Military officers assume the role of leading these sons and daughters of America into harm's way. The military officer is traditionally one of the most respected professions in America. However, in the last few years, the author has noticed that the civil-military relationship may be eroding some of that respect and, in turn, eroding the professionalism of the military. While civil-military relations, along with other factors, may cause an erosion of the military professionalism, the underlying problem facing the profession is a perceived lack of trust between officers.

Congress commissions Army officers for service to the nation. Part of this service involves subordination to the popularly elected president and the duly appointed civilian leadership within the Department of Defense. This duty is irrespective of party affiliation or former service in the military by civilian leaders. However, there is a level of tension, particularly at the strategic leader level, that develops between the civil authorities and the military. Each administration may have lesser or greater degrees of tension, but even in the best of relationships, some tension remains.[1] There is a perception among Army officers that senior Army leaders are not concerned with representing their services or the military as a whole but are

[1] Dale R Herspring, *The Pentagon and the Presidency* (Lawrence, KS: University of Kansas Press, 2005). Throughout this book, Herspring defines the sources and levels of tension between the military and the presidential administration from FDR to George W Bush.

relenting to civilian officials for their own gain.[2] This would go against the very soul of the Army profession today– voluntary selfless service to the nation.

The question becomes what is causing this trend. It seems to stem from several factors. First, military officers overwhelmingly identify themselves as conservative.[3] This identification and subsequent view of policy may cause a rift between senior Army leaders and the liberal civilian leadership within the nation, particularly if one holds to the classic view that a high level of education is associated with liberal views.[4] This potential rift leads to mistrust of the military and may be furthered by a sense of seemingly unconditional support for Republican agendas on national security and foreign affairs where these strategic Army leaders advise the national leadership.[5] One witnessed this very scenario in the recent testimony of General Petraeus. Democratic congressional leaders questioned the objectivity of the report General Petraeus gave on the situation in Iraq. The doubt of objectivity was so great that the general began his statements by stating that the report was not coerced to further a political agenda but was instead his own evaluation, unvetted by the chain of command.[6] The fact that this statement was necessary speaks volumes about the perceived professionalism of Army leaders.

A second factor is the fact that many current Army leaders do not identify the Army Officer Corps as a professional organization.[7] The concept of serving the nation as a member of

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[2] Robert P. Schloesser, "Officer Trust in Army Leadership", (PhD diss. University of Oklahoma, 2003), 160-165.

[3] Peter D. Feaver, *Armed Servants: Agency Oversight, and Civil Military Relations*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2003), 205-206

[4] Bengt Abrahamsson, *Military Professionalism and Political Power*, (Beverly Hills: Sage, 1972), 101

[5] Feaver, 205-206

[6] Testimony of Commander, Multi-National Forces – Iraq General David H. Petraeus, before the Senate Armed Services Committee 10 September 2007.

[7] Gayle L. Watkins and Randi C. Cohen, "In Their Own Words: Army Officers Discuss Their Profession", in *The Future of the Army Profession*, ed. Lloyd J. Matthews (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 83.

a profession is lost on many mid-career officers even though these officers intend to make a career out of the Army. As these officers move into positions and roles in which there is significant civil-military interaction, this thought is bound to hinder the impression of the Army as a profession in the minds of the civilians. Further, as these officers eventually become the strategic leaders of the Army, one must wonder when and if their feelings of the profession will change.

A third factor deals with the responsibility of retired general officers to the profession. In recent years retired general officers have spoken out against the civilian leadership, but only after leaving active service.[8] Some retired generals also openly campaign for political candidates using the title of general.[9] In both cases, these actions undermine the perceived professionalism of the Army. In the first case it gives the appearance that Army leaders are incapable of giving objective advice to their supervisors while on active duty, suggesting that they are simply doing what they are told instead of being the strategic leaders that they are confirmed to be. In the latter case, the campaigning for a political candidate gives the impression that army leaders are not truly objective but are merely prohibited from actively acknowledging it while still in service.

While these factors are important for the outward, public view of the Army as a profession, the more pressing issue is internal to the profession- a perceived lack of trust between junior and senior officers. The relationship between the military and the civil authority, which it serves, is important for the profession; one may argue that this relationship is dependent upon several factors. These factors include preconceived notions about the roles and responsibilities of the military and the civilian authority over them and the personalities of appointed and elected

[8] In April 2006, several media outlets reported that six retired generals, including two who served as former division commanders in Iraq, publicly criticized Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and called for his resignation calling into question his competence and leadership ability prior to entering and during the execution of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

officials and leaders that follow the ebb and flow of American partisan politics. In contrast, the internal, institutional culture will have an impact on the profession that could be more devastating in the future if ill managed today. It is important to note that the civil-military relationships have an impact internally within the profession as well.

If the underlying problem within the current Army profession is a perceived lack of trust, then this perceived lack of trust is a function of the lack of true dialogue between the senior/strategic leaders and the junior and mid-career officers. The responsibility for this problem rests not only with the strategic leaders who play a formative role in the professional culture that is currently adapting to a transforming profession, but also with junior leaders as well. When junior and mid-career officers see the public interactions between the civil leadership and the strategic leaders or read about it in the press, they understand that this is only one side of the story. However, due to a lack of effective communication by strategic leaders, this is the only side of the story that junior leaders receive. This leads to junior leaders having unfulfilled expectations.[10] The military profession is a bureaucracy and this structure conflicts with the anticipated structure that junior leaders have of their chosen profession and adds to unfulfilled expectations [11]. When expectations are not met, this causes a loss of trust – an important element to military professionalism – between junior and senior leaders.

This monograph accomplishes four tasks. First, it defines trust and the requirements for it in organizational culture. Second, it defines the Army profession, identifying the constitutional and legal requirements as well as the social expectations now and in the future. Third, it more deeply defines the problem arising from the lack of discourse and dialogue and the effects they

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[9] A search of candidate endorsements for candidates of the past few elections reveal a number of general officers putting forth their endorsement for candidates using the title of retired general in their endorsement.

[10] Schloesser.

[11] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Soldier and the State: the Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations*. (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1957), 16

have on the profession. Finally, it will offer recommended responsibilities that can be modeled to reverse the current trend and ensure that the Army as a profession remains viable and relevant in the future.

Trust

Trust is an essential element, which forms the core of the professional military ethic.[12] As a foundational concept, trust, from an organizational perspective, facilitates the lasting commitment to meet strategic aims.[13] There are many definitions of trust. Two general definitions of trust are the "total confidence in the integrity, ability, and good character of another"[14]and "anticipated cooperation."[15] Making trust even harder to define is that trust may be seen as a psychological state with interrelated cognitive and behavioral components.[16] Indeed, some have stated that "one not only thinks trust but feels trust."[17] It may be more helpful to think of trust in terms of what it involves. Trust involves the expectation that the object of trust will behave in a favorable manner, or at least a non-harmful manner, and includes the willingness of a person to be vulnerable to the actions of another based on this expectation.[18] Using this definition involves two separate components of trust helpful for organizations – the trust in supervisors and the trust in the organization.

Tan and Tan assert that trust in the supervisor is the individual willingness to be vulnerable to the uncontrollable actions of the supervisor and the trust in the organization is the

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[12] Joseph J. Collins and T. O. Jacobs, "Trust in the Military Profession," in *The Future of the Army Profession*, ed. Lloyd J. Matthews, (Boston: McGraw-Hill), 41.

[13]Yael Lapidot, Ronit Kark, and Shamir Boas, "The impact of situational vulnerability on the development and erosion of follower's trust in leaders", *The Leadership Quarterly* 18 no. 1 (2007), 16-17.

[14] Collins, 40

[15] Roderick M. Kramer, "Trust and Distrust in Organizations: Emerging Perspectives, Enduring Questions", *Annual Review of Psychology* 50 (1999), 571.

[16] Kramer, p.571.

[17] Ibid, 572.

[18] Lapidot, p 17.

confidence that the organization will perform in a manner beneficial or not harmful to the individual.[19] Tan and Tan further assert that these two elements of trust are at once separate and combined. That is, although each element of trust has its own antecedents and outcomes, one affects the other.[20] Their research indicates that the individual will make a judgment on whether or not to trust the organization based on inferences made from the trust one has in the supervisor.[21] Therefore the trust in the supervisor has corollary effects on the trust the individual has in the organization.

Trust for the military professional flows in all directions; top-down, laterally, as well as upward toward superiors.[22] Further, acknowledging trust as an important part of the Army professional ethic, Schloesser asserts that "[t]rust in Army leadership is the cement that holds the Army together."[23] Trust permeates the entire professional environment of the Army, where the vulnerability fosters the commitment to engage in combat or follow the orders of ones superiors to enter harms way. Although, when one makes oneself vulnerable, the likelihood of a trust-erosion is much greater. This is because the more vulnerable one becomes, the more sensitive they are to leader behaviors that lead to trust erosion.[24] Leaders play an important role in the maintenance of trust. Because trust-erosion events are generally more visible and noticeable than trust building events and trust-erosion events carry more weight in individual judgment,[25] any trust-eroding action by an officer will have significant consequences to the perceived trust within the profession. This leads to the waning of trust and rebuilding efforts are much more difficult

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[19] Heww Hoon Tan and Christy S. F. Tan, "Toward the Differentiation of Trust in Supervisor and Trust in Organization" *Genetic, Social, and General Psychology Monographs* 126 no. 2, (2000), 243.

[20] Ibid, 252.

[21] Ibid, 253.

[22] Collins, 41.

[23] Schloesser, 2.

[24] Lapidot, 20.

[25] Kramer, 593.

than initial trust-building efforts once this erosion occurs.[26] Therefore leaders must focus on initial trust-building events.

Defining the Profession

It is important to take time to define the foundational basis of the "profession" as it applies to the Army and the expected roles of the Army for the future. When the term profession is used to describe the Army, it is generally referring to the officer corps by scholars studying military professionalism. Huntington opens his book, *The Soldier and the State*, by asserting that the "modern officer corps is a professional body and the modern military officer is a professional man."[27] LTG William Lennox, in refining the Cadet Leader Development System defined Army officership as "the practice of being a commissioned officer imbued with a unique professional self-concept defined by four identities: Warrior, Member of Profession, Servant of Country, Leader of Character."[28] Thus, the commonly accepted circular logic holds that to be an officer is to be a professional and to be a military professional is to be an officer.

The exclusion of the enlisted soldier by Huntington is interesting. According to Huntington, the enlisted personnel lack the "intellectual skill" and "professional responsibility" of the officer and as such, their vocation is a trade and not a profession. He further cites the lack of progression between the enlisted ranks to the officer ranks, with the limited exception of those who do make the leap to the officer corps, and the educational and training requirements of the officer to support his claim.[29] Sarkesian and Connor assert that while some enlisted men are indeed professionals, particularly at the higher ranks, the responsibilities, accountableness, and civil interactions of the officer corps lead to the symbiotic relationship of the officer corps and the

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[26] Lapidot, 26-27.

[27] Huntington , 7

[28] Don M. Snider, "The U. S. Army as Profession" in *The Future of the Army Profession* 2nd ed., ed. Lloyd Matthews (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2005), 9

[29] Huntington, 17-18.

military profession.[30] Based on these assessments, the term military professional will only refer to military officers throughout the remainder of this monograph.

Huntington states that in order to be a profession, the vocation must have specific expertise, unique responsibility and maintain corporateness.[31] The expertise that Huntington posits the officer holds is the "management of violence."[32] This is a further distinction between enlisted and officer corps, as the enlisted corps does not manage the violence but executes it or applies it.[33] Huntington states that the duty of the officer to the combat force formed to execute the violence is to organize, equip and train it, plan its activities and direct its operation.[34] While the author agrees that the officer must be an expert in managing violence, he finds this view of the sole expertise of the army as quite narrow. Title 10 U.S. Code states the purpose of the Army is:

1. Preserving the peace and security, and providing for the defense of the United States, the Territories, commonwealths, and possessions, and any area occupied by the United States
2. Supporting the national policies
3. Implementing the national objectives
4. Overcoming any nations responsible for aggressive acts that imperil the peace and security of the United States[35]

These stated purposes necessarily broaden the context of the required Army expertise in essence to perform the will of the nation for which it serves, whether it be violence or otherwise. This distinction is important for understanding the current and future expectations of the profession by

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[30] Sam C. Sarkesian and Robert E. Connor, *The US Military Profession into the Twenty-First Century*, (Portland: Frank Cass Publishers, 1999), 19.

[31] Huntington, 8

[32] Ibid, 11

[33] Ibid, 18

[34] Ibid, 11

the nation with the increasing speculation that the current military battlefield environment is indicative of the future of warfare. [36]

Huntington also notes a social responsibility to serve the state.[37] He compares the responsibility of the officer to that of the lawyer and the doctor. In the same way as the lawyer has a responsibility to his client and the doctor to his patient of providing expert advice and services, the officer must provide the same expert advice and service to the state which he or she serves. In all three cases, the professional cannot act on his or her own behalf but, according to the laws of professional ethics, must act in the best interests of those they serve within the limitation of their expertise.[38] This corporateness implies that officership is a public bureaucratized profession in which the right to be a part of the profession is limited to a select group who meet certain educational and training requirements and whose continual education and certification requirements are continually monitored within the profession. This is akin to the licensing and certification requirements of being a lawyer or a doctor.[39]

Sarkesian and Connor provide six requirements for a profession as follows:

1. Defined area of competence based on expert knowledge
2. System of continuing education designed to maintain professional competence
3. Obligation to society and service without concern for remuneration
4. System of values that perpetuate professional character and establish and maintain legitimate relationships with society
5. Institutional framework within which the profession functions

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[35] 10 U.S. Code, Section 3062

[36] Several articles depicting the future of warfare point to the current environments of Afghanistan and Iraq as indicative of the type of engagements military forces can expect to face in the future.

[37] Huntington, 14-15.

[38] Ibid, 15-16.

[39] Huntington 16.

6. Control over its system of rewards and punishments and is in a position to determine the quality of those entering the profession[40]

With these characteristics of a profession in mind, they note that what separates the military profession from other professions such as that of doctor or lawyer is the unlimited liability and the "state as the sole client."[41]

While Huntington speaks of a bureaucracy within the profession that is formed primarily on the hierarchy of ranks throughout the officer corps, Sarkesian and Connor have a different view of the bureaucracy within the profession.[42] They posit that there are three professional tiers that comprise the totality of the profession. The first tier consists of the relationship between the profession and the national leadership and general public. This tier exists at the highest levels of the profession. The second tier is the internal perception and practice within the system itself. The third tier comprises the functionality of the profession at the local unit level as perceived through the command structure. They posit that the interpretation of the military profession may differ at each tier; however, the fundamental principles of the profession transcend all tiers. They further assert that the totality of the profession itself is dependent on the trust between and within each tier. Thus, any conflict or disenchantment between or within the tiers invariable affects the entire profession.[43]

In the post-Vietnam era, Sarkesian argues that there were three groups within the junior officer ranks that formed the bottom layer of the military profession. These groups were defined by their commitment to the profession. The first group, which he believes were not truly professionals, served only to fulfill some sort of individual obligation and felt that this obligation

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[40] Sarkesian 21.

[41] Ibid, 21.

[42] Huntington, 16.

[43] Sarkesian, 22-23.

was better served as an officer rather than an enlisted Soldier. The second group were initially committed to the profession but later became disenfranchised with the profession due to demands, values or expectations. The third group he defines as the hard-core professionals who were willing to sacrifice family, friends, and self in order to fulfill the needs of the profession.[44] Sarkesian contends that this third group is comprised of United States Military Academy graduates. This generalization is quite assumptive when applied to the professional environment. In fact, the percentage of USMA cadets in 1994 who planned to stay in the Army until retirement was nearly identical to the total force of First and Second Lieutenants in 1996.[45] Nevertheless, assuming the three groups of junior officers identified do exist today, these groups would more often reside inside the third tier of the profession. Yet, as mentioned before, because each tier's internal functioning has an impact on the other tiers and the profession as a whole, the junior officer groups are an important aspect to consider for their relationship to the total profession.

Looking at the three groups of junior officers, the majority of junior officers reside in the second group. In 1992, surveys conducted on the career intentions of Second and First Lieutenants indicate 13% and 16% respectively were definitely leaving the service upon completion of their obligation (first group of junior officers) and 31% and 16% planned to stay until retirement (third group of junior officers). In 1996, these percentages changed to 14% and 17% respectively definitely getting out upon completion of their obligation and 20% of both ranks planning to stay until retirement.[46] Thus, in both studies, the majority of the junior officers could have their opinion on whether to become a career professional officer influenced in some way. This was an era in the Army characterized by an excessively high optempo at the end of the

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[44]Sam C. Sarkesian, *The Professional Army in a Changing Society*, (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1975), 17-18.

[45] Lynn M. Milan et al., Measures Collected on the USMA Class of 1998 as Part of the Baseline Officer Longitudinal Data Set (BOLDS) (Alexandria: U.S. Army Research Institute for the Behavioral Sciences, 2002), 31.

[46] Milan.

decade[47] and downsizing as well as the pull of a booming economy in the civilian sector. Since these officers represent the future leaders of the profession, it is imperative for senior leaders to focus on this group.

However, senior leaders failed to provide this focus during the 1990's and allowed the profession to develop a dangerous trust problem that led to the exodus of increased numbers of junior officers.[48] This was also a period of drawdown within the military as a whole and may have affected senior leaders' focus on this issue. A comprehensive research project was conducted to evaluate the current state and future of the Army profession and was published in 2001. One of the nine conclusions of this study was that "the 'trust gap' between junior and senior Army officers, the junior and senior members of the profession, has reached dangerously dysfunctional levels."[49] The trust problems in the Army was not just limited to the junior officers but instead permeated the entire profession as Lieutenant Colonels and Colonels also voiced these same sentiments.[50]

Problem within the Profession

The Army's strategic leadership has fostered a culture and furthered a system that inhibits the occurrence of collective learning between senior leaders and the junior leaders. This showed during the reaction to LTC Paul Yingling's article, "The Failure of Generalship."[51] In a sampling of majors at the Advanced Officers Warfighting Course, the course previously known as the

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[47] Army Training Leader Development Panel (ATLDP), The Army Training Leader Development Panel Officer Study Report to the Army, OS-1, OS-8.

[48] Snider, 26.

[49] Gayle L. Watkins and Don M. Snider, "Project Conclusions" in *The Future of the Army Profession*, ed. Lloyd Matthews (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 542.

[50] ATLPD, OS-9.

[51] Paul Yingling, "A Failure in Generalship," *Armed Forces Journal* (May 2007).

Command and General Staff Course[52], the rhetoric surrounding this article, was initially not about the content of the article. Instead, the prevalent reaction of the U.S. Army Majors in this sampling was about how Yingling would never make the rank of colonel, let alone general, for his audacity in criticizing the senior leadership. This initial reaction speaks volumes about the professional culture. It provides a hint that the current culture may be one characterized by an attitude that it is better to play the game for personal gain than to voice an opinion on the future of the profession if that opinion is one of criticism. Even if one does not think that the actions of the senior leaders are detrimental to the profession, this reaction shows that many, if not most, will sit quietly watching the slow internal destruction of the profession rather than challenge superiors in order to better the organization.[53]

The modern all-volunteer Army relies on selfless service and commitment from all its members in order to accomplish its missions. Soldiers must surrender their right of self-determination in order for the Army to function in a combat environment.[54] This requires trust from and between peers, superiors and subordinates. "Any erosion of trust therefore will erode the core ethic of the military profession."[55] Yet, according to a study conducted by Collins and Jacobs, there exists a trust problem not only within units but also throughout the Army as a whole.[56] However for the profession as previously defined, a critical area for trust resides with the trust between the junior officers and the senior officers.

The question which must then be answered is what is the source of this trust problem? It is imperative for the profession to find this answer in order to bridge this gap in trust between

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[52] This sampling was based an the discussions in class of Staff Group 15, CGSC 07-01 as part of the Leadership and History block in both one over 17 and on over 64 formats.

[53] James R Detert, and Amy C. Edmondson, "Why employees are afraid to speak," *Harvard Business Review* (May 2007): 23-24.

[54] Collins, 41.

[55] Ibid.

[56] Collins, 55.

junior and senior officers and reduce the gap to an acceptable level. During the 1970's and continuing into the 1980s, there was a perception of junior officers that in order to get promoted they had to lie and give false reports in order to meet the expectations of the senior leaders[57]. Additionally, mid-career offices expressed contempt for the careerist attitude they perceived in senior leaders.[58] The 1980's continued the perception of the careerist attitudes to the point where officers were more concerned with their personal ambitions than the service, mission and subordinates.[59] In addition to the perception of careerism was the perception that any mistake would ruin the ambitious career pursuit, a zero-defect environment. The 1990's was a period of transformation within the Army characterized by a significant drawdown of forces after Desert Storm yet the Army maintained a high operational tempo despite the reduction in forces. It was during this period that the retention of junior officers became an issue and mistrust between junior and senior leaders was recognized and acknowledged within the profession.[60] These conditions in part led to the Chief of Staff of the Army to commission the Army Training Leader Development Panel to do an officer study.[61] The Chief of Staff provided a mission directive to the panel to "review, assess, and provide recommendations for the development and training of our 21st Century leaders."[62]

In the conclusions made by the panel dealing with Army culture, two areas begin to address the area of trust – retention and micromanagement. Under retention, the panel concluded that commitment was not reciprocal; the Army did not return the commitment expected from the

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[57] Anneliese Steele, "Are the Relationships Between Junior and Senior Leaders in the U. S. Army Officer Corps Dysfunctional?" (monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2001), 7

[58] Ibid, 8.

[59] Ibid, 10.

[60] Joe LeBeouf, "Case No.3: The 2000 Army Training and Leader Development Panel" in *The Future of the Army Profession*, ed. Lloyd Matthews (Boston: McGraw-Hill, 2002), 488.

[61] Ibid

[62] Ibid, 502

officer to the Army back to the officer and the officer's family.[63] The officers did not trust that the Army would care for them commensurate to the way the officer was expected to care for the Army. Second, the panel found micromanagement to be a common part of Army culture.[64] In addition, from this part of the Army culture there developed "a growing perception that a lack of trust stems from the leader's ability to be invulnerable to criticism" and inhibited the learning value of experience.[65]

This loss of trust has had damaging effects on the profession and has caused a rift within the profession between the senior officers and the junior officers. Many senior officers will dismiss this disconnect as the disgruntled ramblings of a complaining soldier, which is a happy soldier.[66] Snider contends that the chasm between junior and senior officers is not new and is a function of "different levels of responsibility and years of experience within the profession."[67] This assumes that the attitudes, aptitudes, and expectations of past, present and future junior officers are the same. They are not the same. This thought allows the cultivating of a "father knows best" culture to persevere in time when junior leaders increasingly have more deployments and combat experience than the senior leaders had at the same time in the senior leader's career. The failure by senior officers to recognize the difference between normal dissent due to differing viewpoints and a true trust issue only serves to deepen the divide in trust to the levels mentioned.

Additionally, there is a generational gap between junior and senior leaders. This generational gap causes different views on professionalism and produces different expectations from the junior leader. Leonard Wong contends that the generational gap fueled the failed early

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[63] ATLDP, 0S-8-9.

[64] ATLDP, OS-8-OS-9.

[65] Ibid, OS-9.

[66] Leonard Wong, Generations Apart: Xers and Boomers in the Officer Corps (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2000), 7.

[67] Snider, 26

recognition of a trust problem mentioned earlier. Wong believes that the senior officers thought they understood the world of junior officers, while junior officers thought otherwise.[68] The generation of the senior leaders was that of the baby boomers while the junior leaders' generations were the Generation X and Generation Next or Millennials. A characterization of these generations is warranted to understand the differences between the motivations and drivers of each generation.

The first generation of note is the Baby Boomer generation. This generation is represented by those born between 1946 and 1964.[69] This group, in the military, represents the majority of the senior officers in the Army, COL and above.[70] The Baby Boomers are often referred to as the me generation for their ability to focus on themselves and where they are going. They have an intense correlation between who they are and what they accomplish in their careers.[71] Boomers are characterized as being optimistic, believing anything is possible and as being competitive.[72]

The second generation is Generation X. This generation is represented by those born between 1965 and 1980. This group, in the military, represents the mid-career and junior officer ranks, LTC/MAJ to CPT. The Xers grew up in an environment where nearly ever major and revered institution from the Presidency to organized religion to corporate America has been entangled in some type of crime or questionable actions[73]. Add to that the increased divorce rate that occurred in America during this period and you have a generation who "distrusts the

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[68] Wong, 3.

[69] For all of the generations, the accepted dates of inclusion for one generation vary by three to six years depending on the source.

[70] This number is based on an eight year progression from data used by Wong to delineate generations by rank in 2000.

[71] Lynne C. Lancaster and David Stillman, *When Generations Collide* (New York: HarperBusiness, 2002), 22.

[72] Ibid, 21-22.

permanence of institutional and personal relationships."[74] This skepticism and weariness towards authority also led them to depend on themselves rather than institutions who they believe have let them down. As such, the generation of the "latch-key kids," Xers became extremely resourceful and are an extremely independent generation.[75] This independence translates to a generational belief in "self-command."[76]

While the focus of the generation divide is on the Boomers vs Xers, one must acknowledge that there is undoubtedly a gap between any generations. The gap between the Boomers and their predecessors, the Traditionalists was over chain of command and power. As the optimistic and competitive Boomers moved up in positions of power, the two generations learned to negotiate power sharing and translated those partnerships into prosperity.[77] In this way, the gap was reduced by the commonalities between these two generations, the pursuit and securing of power in a corporate and positional sense. This power is not a priority for Xers who favor equality and individuality and leads to a bigger culture clash.

Pausing for a moment to compare these generations from a military perspective, it is important to note that the generational differences between Baby Boomers and Generation X within the military is less drastic because the "self-selection into the Army serves to homogenize the population."[78] In a survey of USMA cadets and their civilian counterparts at Syracuse University, showed that the differences in the value-orientations and attitudes were great. In fact

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[73] Lancaster, 25.

[74] Ibid.

[75] Wong, 7.

[76] Lancaster, 26.

[77] Ibid, 23-24.

[78] Wong, 8.

the cadets' attitudes were consistent with the traditional military values of decades past.[79] According to the thought that the attitudes of those entering the military are not far removed from years past, Wong conducted a study of the differences between the generations within the military by comparing captains at the seven year mark from the Baby Boomers to those of Generation X.[80] Wong noted five differences between the two generations of captains:

1. Xer Captains are more confident in their abilities.
2. Generation X officers see loyalty differently. That is, while Generation X officers are loyal, their loyalty is directed toward the bonds of trusts between the institution of the Army and the officer, not the guarantee of a career typical of the Baby Boomers.
3. Xer Captains want more balance between life and work.
4. Pay is important to Xer captains, but won't hold them in.
5. Xers are not impressed by rank.[81]

The implication here is that while the generational divide of society as a whole may be less apparent inside of the profession; one cannot discount its effects on the perspectives or ideologies of the officers from that generation.

If one accepts that the trust gap that developed in the Army is between the officers of the Baby Boomer generation and those of Generation X, then it follows that any solution to solve this gap must also account for the future generations as well. This future is the Millennials. This generation, also known as Generation Y, Generation Next, the Echo Boomers, and the Baby Busters, are represented by those born between 1981 through 1999. Much of the research on generations revolves around those in the workplace and this leaves the Millennials with little data

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[79] Volker C. Franke, "Generation X and the Military: A Comparison of Attitudes and Values between West Point Cadets and College Students", *Journal of Political and Military Sociology* 29 (summer 2001): 92-119.

[80] Wong, 11.

[81] Ibid, 11-16.

to effectively analyze as they are just beginning to enter this arena. However, some trend data of their characteristics can be gleaned. William Strauss and Neil Howe predict this generation to be the next "Greatest Generation."[82] They reason that the Millennials will have inherited loyalty from the Traditionalists (the generation before the Boomers), optimism from the Boomers, and some skepticism from the Xers forming their own identity of pragmatic realists.[83] It is perhaps their potential workplace view that may hold the key to bridging the "trust gap" threatening to destroy the profession from within. This view is one of collaboration.[84]

Before looking to a solution, we must delve closer into the effects of the generation differences or gap noted between the Boomers and the Xers from a military perspective. The differences based on this gap are more than the typical junior leader/senior leader rift that senior leaders claim it to be.[85] It is an ingrained cultural difference which only serves to widen the gap in the profession. This gap is filled with a lack of trust that has led to the departure of so many officers from the profession that the promotion rates to field grade are 95-98%.[86] The Army would like one to believe that the higher promotion rates are due solely to increased need for these grades due to the increase of BCTs and subsequent positions.[87] However, the biggest loss of junior leaders occurred between FY98 and FY01, prior to the increase of BCTs in FY02.[88] The Army is again addressing retention issues in its ranks.

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[82] Lancaster, 29.

[83] Ibid, 29-30.

[84] Ibid, 31.

[85] Wong, 5.

[86] US Army Officer Retention Fact Sheet as of May 25 2007

[87] Ibid.

[88] Ibid.

The percentage of junior officers leaving the service after their initial commitment increased from eight percent in 2003 to 13 percent in 2006.[89] The depletion of junior officers is draining the future resources of officers that are the future of the profession. Of the West Point class of 2002, only 42% remain on active duty.[90] The numbers are similar for ROTC commissioned officers as well. While the extremely high OPTEMPO and its strain on the military family is an easily identifiable reason for the increased departure of officers, the problem goes deeper for the OPTEMPO is only part of the departure decision.[91] As one year group 2000 officer said of his reason for leaving the service, it is an issue of "quality of life."[92] As Wong mentioned before, being an officer does not define this generation of junior officers.[93] In fact, the work and life balance for junior officers is increasingly important. If this balance cannot be maintained in the Army, the junior officer has shown that they will leave the profession and opt for a career in which the work and life balance reaches a more acceptable equilibrium. This was the case before the Army engaged in the OPTEMPO it has now.

While the Army may address this current crisis in retention through incentives designed to keep junior officers in the profession, one must question the strategic initiatives to address this long looming problem. In fact the Government Accounting Office (GAO) reported in its investigation of the crisis that the Army, despite having the direst situation in the military in terms of officer retention, does not have nor is close to implementing a strategic plan to address this issue.[94] The GAO reports that the Army will have a shortage of over 3000 officers each year

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[89] Andrew Tilghman, "The Army's Other Crisis," *Washington Monthly*, December 2007.

[90] Tilghman.

[91] Schloesser, 168-179

[92] Thom Shanker, "Young Officers Leaving Army at a High Rate," *New York Times*, April 9 2006.

[93] Wong, 14

[94] GAO, *Military Personnel: Strategic Plan Needed to Address Army's Emerging Officer Accession and Retention Challenges*, GAO-07-224, Washington DC, January 2007.

through FY2013 including the ranks of lieutenant colonel, major and captain.[95] Additionally, the GAO asserts that without a plan to address these and future retention problems, "the Army will not have the information it needs to effectively and efficiently improve its retention of officers in both the near term and beyond."[96]

The failure by senior officials to adequately address these retention issues is just another example of senior leaders betraying the trust of junior officers. In 2001, the Army Vision had three main components, Readiness, Transformation and People.[97] The officer study commissioned by the Army Chief of Staff focused on the people aspect and identified the need for the Army to "restore the officers' trust that the Army is committed to them and their families."[98] With the continued and increasing exodus of officers, the army and its senior leaders are not meeting this suggestion.

Part of finding the solution to the gap of trust and subsequent departure of the foundation of the future of the profession is for the Army to evaluate itself critically. This is part of being a learning organization. As early as 1989, the Army has focused on becoming a learning organization.[99] In 1994 General Sullivan stated that the Army is a learning organization.[100] Even the leadership doctrine states that, "The Army, as a learning organization, harnesses the experiences of its people and organizations to improve the way it operates."[101] But the question

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[95] GAO, 27.

[96] Ibid, 30.

[97] ATLDP, OS-1.

[98] Ibid, OS-11.

[99] TRADOC Pam 525-5, Force XXI Operations.(Fort Monroe: Army Training and Doctrine Command, 1994), 4-11.

[100] Margret Wheatley, "Can the Army become a Learning Organization?" Quality and Participation, (March 1994).

[101] FM 6-22, Army Leadership, (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2006), 8-2.

remains what is a learning organization and based on that definition, is the Army a learning organization?

Juceviciene defines a learning organization as the "continuous development of the organization its members, groups and structures, facilitated by the empowering learning-intensive environment of the organization."[102] Bencsik and Bognar assert that learning organizations are characterized by a "culture based on the superior human values of fondness, admiration and sympathy [and] practices that support creative conversation and co-ordinated activity…."[103] Peter Senge defines learning organizations as "organizations where the people continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning how to learn together."[104]

Senge believes there are five core components, which he calls "disciplines" essential for any true learning organization: Personal Mastery, Mental Models, Shared Vision, Team Learning, and Systems Thinking.[105] Diane McGinty Weston identified the components necessary for a learning organization as vision, values and integrity; dialogue; and systems thinking.[106] In both cases, the core components required of learning organizations involve the inclusive sharing of values and ideas as a team. The ATLDP Officer study adds that in order to "be an efficient learning organization, the Army must have standards and effective assessment, evaluation, and

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[102] Palmira Jucevience and Ruta Leonaviciene, "The Change of Human Resource Development Concepts in the Process of Becoming a Learning Organization" *Economics and Management* 12 (2007),. 571.

[103] Andrea Bencsik and Kristinza Bognar, "Success Criteria of a Knowledge Based Organization – Or the Necessity of the Leadership Style Change," *Problems and Perspectives in Management* 5 no. 2, (2007): 53.

[104] Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Dimension: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* ((New York: Currency Doubleday, 1990), 3.

[105] Ibid, 6-10.

[106] Senge,. xii.

feedback for leaders, units and itself."[107] Leadership doctrine holds that the visualize, describe, direct, lead continuum has an assessment and feedback mechanism**.**[108] However, instead of a loop, junior officers only see a one-way line that runs steeply downhill leaving no room for input from below.

In his US Army War College Strategy Research Project of 2007, Colonel John D. Williams asserts that based on Senge's five disciplines, the Army is not a learning organization.[109] The ATDLP concluded that the Army lacks the institutional mechanisms to properly assess, evaluate and provide the feedback necessary to be a learning organization.[110] In terms of the profession, the frustration noted by the ATDLP from junior officers combined with their departure from the service reaching dangerously critical levels, shows that the Army and, by default, the profession are not true learning organizations. But what must be done in order to reverse this trend?

If the Army is to develop into the true learning organization it espouses itself to be, then the professional members of this organization have to be committed to improving the organization. This may require junior members challenging the current paradigm, the current structure, or the current senior leader actions. However, this cannot occur when the reverence of rank outweighs the commitment to the profession. This bureaucratic devotion often springs from the feeling that says, "When I am a, (insert rank or position here), I will change things." The problem is twofold. One, this commitment to change usually fades by the time the rank or position is attained. Two, even if the commitment is still strong, the circumstances and the

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[107] ATLDP, OS-3

[108] FM 6-0, Mission Command: Command and Control of Army Forces (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2003).

[109] John D. Williams, "Is the Army a Learning Organization?" (strategic research project, U.S. Army War College, 2007), 23.

[110] ATLDP, OS-3.

environment have changed such that the effective time for change has passed and the effects of the lack of change have presented an entirely new set of challenges.

Learning also occurs from observation. As such when a junior leader sees a peer or a superior speak out against convention to a superior, they will learn from the subsequent series of events. If the officer speaking out receives praise for his courage and commitment and the content of his dissent legitimately considered, the observer sees that such commitment is welcome in this organization. However, if the officer sees the challenging officer demeaned ridiculed or disregarded for his failure to "get with the program," the lesson of keeping quiet or else becomes the new standard. The latter may not be the most prevalent circumstance, but it carries the most weight. It only takes one severe admonishment to stifle any criticism from both the challenger and the observer as well. The result has many consequences: the junior officers fail to voice dissenting opinions; junior officers become more career focused vice profession focused; the profession fails to grow and learn; and junior officers lose trust in senior leaders.

The profession in attempting to become a learning organization must look at two critical "disciplines" in order to transform: shared vision and team learning. In creating a shared vision within the profession, the Army must move from the "telling stage" to the "co-creating stage" of a five step process of building a shared vision. This five step model includes, in order from lowest to highest stages of building a shared vision, telling, selling, testing, consulting, co-creating.[111] The telling stage involves the "boss" creating a vision and the organization following it. The "co-creating stage" involves the "boss" and the members of the organization jointly building the vision together so that it is a collaborative process.[112] The critical component for working in the "co-creating stage" of this "discipline" is the main emphasis of the team learning

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[111] Peter M. Senge, et al, *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* (New York: Currency Doubleday, 1994), 314.

[112] Senge, et al., 313-326. This section provides guidance on building a shared vision.

discipline as well as one of Weston's core components of a learning organization – dialogue. It is also a way to bridge the generational gap between junior and senior officers.

Discussion and Discourse

From a communications viewpoint, discourse is the combination of discussion and dialogue.[113] In a team learning environment, both discussion and dialogue are necessary and the power of the two lies in their synergy.[114] In a discussion, views are batted back and forth with the object of the game to have one's view "win" over others' views. Even though one may compromise and accept points from another's view, it is only done to strengthen the position of one's own view in order to become victorious. Since winning is "not compatible with coherence and truth", David Bohm holds that one must realize first that their individual thought is incoherent in order to reach coherent thought.[115] In order to gain understanding of the incoherent thought and reach coherent thought, it requires something more than discussion; it requires discourse.

Dialogue is defined by the American Heritage Dictionary as a conversation between two people. However this definition is wholly inadequate in delineating the true nature of dialogue. This definition implies that any informal, verbal exchange of ideas is a dialogue. Bohm's theory of dialogue holds that dialogue is one half of discourse which is a means to achieving coherent thought – the other part being discussion.[116] Simpson, Large, and O'Brien define dialogue as "a process that facilitates the new construction of the collective mind."[117] This is the purpose of dialogue – to find and operate with a collective, common and coherent voice.

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[113] Senge, *The Fifth Discipline,* 240.

[114] Ibid.

[115] Ibid, 241.

[116] Ibid, 240

[117] Barbara Simpson, Bob Large, and Matthew O'Brien Bridging "Difference through Dialogue: A Constructivist Perspective," Journal of Constructivist Psychology 17 (2007): 57.

Dialogue works hand in hand with discussion for it is discussion where decisions are made, yet it is in dialogue where complex issues are explored and a richer understanding of the issues is collectively attained.[118] While new courses of action come from discussion, "new actions emerge as a by-product of dialogue."[119] Dialogue is not a substitute for action but is a precursor.[120] By engaging in dialogue the team can "develop a deep trust that cannot help but to carry over to discussions."[121] Additionally, through dialogue, team members develop the skills that make discussions "productive rather than destructive."[122] Dialogue offers a safe environment for discovering the profound learning that it can lead to.[123]

In order to achieve dialogue, there must be a suspension of all assumptions by the individuals within the team and an acknowledgement that all those involved are colleagues. Additionally, especially in the early development of dialogue within a team, there must be a facilitator.[124] Bohm himself expressed doubts about dialogue within an organization because "[h]ierarchy is antithetical to dialogue."[125] But he states that it is possible to overcome if everyone within the organization values the benefits of dialogue more than he or she values his or her rank. If all participants are not willing to agree to suspending assumptions and the removal of rank within the dialogue, dialogue and its benefits cannot occur.[126] Additional requirements of

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[118] Senge, 247.

[119] Ibid.

[120] Judith Kuttab and Edy Kauffman, "An Exchange on Dialogue," *Journal of Palestine Studies* 17 no. 2 (Winter, 1988): 87.

[121] Senge, 247.

[122] Ibid, 248.

[123] Ibid.

[124] Ibid, 246-247

[125] Ibid, 245.

[126] Ibid, 246.

the participants are to speak freely and openly about the subject of the dialogue while allowing and expecting the same open speech from others regardless of the relevancy of the opinion.[127]

Dialogue is distinctively a team activity. As such, it provides an opportunity to build trust and a close relationship between the members. This closeness that occurs through dialogue is not dependent on the commonality of the team members and does not mean a complete agreement or sharing of viewpoints.[128] However, through dialogue, members will view other team members as colleagues with different viewpoints as opposed to adversaries.[129] As Wong points out, junior officers desire deeper relationships as well as an environment in which there is less dependency on hierarchy within the organization.[130] Dialogue, if used effectively, provides the opportunity to meet these goals for the junior officer and reduce the trust gap that has developed between junior officers and senior officers. This is greatly needed in the profession.

Dialogue also builds a consensus within the group. This consensus not only provides a view shared by the team, but enables the individual members to enjoy a larger perspective of reality than is available individually. In order for dialogue to reach such a level that it is not dependent on the chemistry between the members of the team, it must be grounded in reflection and inquiry.[131] This requires self-development as well as self awareness by the individual members of the team. The more the individual members become enlightened on whom they are and why they are who they are while remaining open in their thought, the better the effects of

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[127] Simpson, 48.

[128] Senge, 245.

[129] Ibid.

[130] Wong, 20-22.

[131] Senge, 242-243.

dialogue will be for the organization.[132] Simpson, et al, believe that the difficult task of dialogue requires the willingness of all participants to explore their core identity.[133]

Discourse is not story-telling. Story-telling is how the military has traditionally spread the culture that is failing the profession. The conveying of the "truth" that comes from the top down is no longer valid in the minds of the junior officer. Although there is an application for story-telling in the military, particularly when relating a feeling of sacrifice and honor, and the internalization of duty for the nation, it is insufficient for tangible application for progress within the profession. Story-telling imparts to the listener an expected input-to-outcome relationship that does not account for the current learning within the profession only the past experiences of superiors. Additionally, the stories may not be a true representation of reality but are selective accounts emphasizing some events over others.[134] This may have been a valid developmental tool during the Cold War when the professional focus was on defeating the Krasnovian horde of the National Training Center. That templated, structured, and highly predictable pattern of operation for the profession has passed. The modern and future professional must rely on a more adaptable, fluid, and inclusive way of knowledge transfer. This knowledge transfer must flow in all directions. Junior officers need to have their voices heard by senior leaders. A combination of dialogue and storytelling may be appropriate for the near future because, while dialogue can build a pool of collective knowledge, storytelling gives life to this knowledge.[135]

Lack of Dialogue within the Profession

It is here, in the area of dialogue, that the senior officers have failed the profession. Although there are several mechanisms which the senior leaders have implemented into the

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[132] Senge, 248-249

[133] Simpson, 57.

[134] Kimberly B. Boal and Patrick L. Schultz, "Storytelling, time and evolution: The role of strategic leadership in complex adaptive systems", *The Leadership Quarterly*, 18 (2007), 426.

[135] Ibid, 419.

professional doctrine that would seem to facilitate this type of dialogue, as noted by the ATLDP there are no assessment and feedback mechanisms that monitor the progress.[136] This lack of assessment keeps the professional culture focused on the superficial tangibles of results and achievements and less focused on development and internal functionality of the profession. Additionally, the Army has failed to understand the concepts of dialogue and discourse as mentioned above. Whenever the issue of trust in the Army profession receives serious and critical mention, the concept of communication surfaces as either a solution or as a source of the current state of disconnect through its absence.[137] Yet the Army has relied on outdated and ineffectual means of communicating within the profession while occasionally repainting these concepts with words such as learning organization, discourse, and discussion. This has created a false sense of transformation that is inherently transparent to junior officers who expressed distrust in the ATLDP 2001 Officer Study and are expressing disenchantment by leaving.

Mentorship

One would be hard pressed to find a senior leader who did not have an open door policy in which a concerned subordinate can voice his thoughts to senior leadership from first line supervisors up the chain of command to the strategic leaders. In fact, the senior leader may indeed listen and perhaps provide feedback to the junior officer. However, this is generally just listening. The senior officer is providing a sounding board or a venting outlet for the junior officer. When a conversation occurs, this is discussion. In some cases, the words from the junior officer may motivate the senior officer to make a change within the organization. This leads to dialogue.

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[136] ATLDP, OS-3.

[137] Several of the articles, monographs, articles and books cited in this monograph discuss the value and requirements of communication including Wong, Shanker, ATLDP, and Collins.

One of the mechanisms the Army has to facilitate dialogue within the profession is mentorship. The Army defines mentorship as "the voluntary developmental relationship that exists between a person of greater experience and a person of lesser experience that is characterized by mutual trust and respect."[138] This is a voluntary relationship that affects personal and professional development with its strength lying in trust and respect.[139] In fact, the most exhibited behavior of mentors as reported by officers who have or had mentors is that the mentor demonstrated trust.[140] One of the benefits that the Army realizes from mentoring is increased commitment by the mentee to the Army leading to increased retention of the mentee.[141] Two of the essential requirements for a successful mentoring relationship are trust and partnership building.[142] Trust is required to come from and to both the mentee and the mentor recognizing that the two are professional partners.[143] With 69% of all officers reporting to currently have mentors or have had mentors at some point,[144] and the demonstration of trust being the highest noted behavior of the mentor, one is left to wonder where the erosion of trust between senior and junior officers occurred.

There are two areas within mentorship that may have left room for the erosion of trust. The first area is the low number of senior raters who are mentors to those they senior rate. While 92% of officers report their mentor to be someone of higher rank, only 12% reported that person

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[138] FM 6-22, 8-14.

[139] Ibid.

[140] Alma G. Steinberg and Susann M. Nourizadeh, "Superior, Peer, and Subordinate Mentoring in the Army" (paper presented at the 110th Annual Convention of he American Psychological Association, Alexandria, VA, 2001), 14.

[141] DCS, G-1, *Army Mentorship Handbook* (Rosslyn, VA: Headquarters, Department of the Army, DCS, G-1, 2005), 6.

[142] Ibid, 14.

[143] Ibid.

[144] Steinberg, 6.

to be their senior rater.[145] Steinberg and Nourizadeh state that this group of officers not only fits the traditional model of mentoring between junior and senior members of the organization but, by mentoring, they have the opportunity to display mentoring behaviors, the highest being trust.[146] Additionally, the communication required in mentoring relationships closely resembles the requirements of dialogue. That is, mentors are encouraged to reserve assumptions and judgments of the mentee opting instead to listen to the free speech of the mentee and find the deeper meaning behind the words.[147] If senior raters are not considered mentors to those under them, this leaves room for the erosion of trust. This allows trust erosion by neglecting a formative relationship of trust, allowing negative occurrences to supersede positive interactions, and thus allowing the negative to frame and influence the trust between the junior officer and his superior instead of a positive relationship. The lack of senior raters as mentors also misses an opportunity to gain trust for the organization through interaction with the supervisor.

The second area that can lead to the erosion of trust for mentorship is that mentorship fails to adequately replicate dialogue. Mentorship emphasizes a top-down development. The very definition implies that the mentor has more experience than the mentee and that this knowledge of experience is to be passed down from the mentor. The Army encourages the assessment of the mentee through evaluation through the 360-degree assessment tool and identifies the willingness to change and transition of the mentee as a sign of a successful relationship.[148] There is no mention of change or assessment of the mentor. Thus, the result of successful mentorship does not include the conceptual thought of dialogue, but involves the

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[145] Steinberg, 11.

[146] Ibid, 18.

[147] DCS, G1.

[148] Ibid, 15-17.

changing of thought and behavior of the mentee under the guidance of the mentor while the mentor remains unchanged. This reinforces the hierarchical antithesis of dialogue.

Mentoring and coaching are not dialogue. In fact, mentoring and coaching are processes within the officer and leader development system that can help facilitate discourse. Although current leadership doctrine speaks of both the necessity and the benefit of mentoring and coaching,[149] the Army has no mechanism for ensuring its implementation and therefore is widely neglected within the profession. This serves to widen the gap between senior leaders and junior leaders in the future by maintaining old cultural norms that are no longer in keeping with the societal and generational expectations of the profession. Mentoring should allow a senior leader to enable a junior leader to find his or her path within the profession. Coaching should develop leaders so that each officer can reach his or her full leadership potential. Both of these lay the foundation for the professional development needed to ensure meaningful and constructive discourse, but are not dialogue in and of themselves.

Knowledge management

The Army has endeavored to increase knowledge sharing through several means to include the Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) and the Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS). The mission of the CALL is to collect, analyze, disseminate, integrate, and archive Army and Joint, Interagency, and Multinational (JIM) observations, insights, lessons (OIL) and tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) to support full spectrum military operations.[150] The lessons learned from CALL are defined as "validated knowledge and experience derived from … military training, exercises and combat operations that lead to a change in behavior" at the tactical, operational, or strategic level as applied to at least one domain

[149] FM 6-22, 8-11 – 8-15

[150] CALL website.

of the Army's DOTMLPF.[151] The function is to provide a resource for the Army in which to document and archive changes and adaptations made in order to ensure preparedness for current and future operations. The data collected and analyzed is largely of a warfighting nature and a search through the CALL website will produce little if any institutional professional lessons learned as applied to the junior and senior officer relationship.[152]

The BCKS comes closer to providing a professional learning apparatus. The BCKS "supports the online generation, application, management and exploitation of Army knowledge to foster collaboration among Soldiers and Units in order to share expertise and experience; facilitate leader development and intuitive decision making; and support the development of organizations and teams."[153] One of the methods of providing this service is by supporting professional forums. The professional forum is a network of similar professionals who are brought together by a common desire to learn and better the members of the forum. This is done through connections, conversations, content and context in a collaborative and collective way in order to advance the professional network.[154] In describing how to build a professional forum, the Army incorporates roles similar to those required to build dialogue within a team such as members, topic leaders and facilitators.[155] Currently, the idea behind these forums and networks is to encourage conversation and learning with and among peer groups. Although it focuses on learning through dialogue about experiences and knowledge exchanges, it only does so on a horizontal level. Incorporating a vertical forum which incorporates all officers and not just

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[151] Army Regulation 11-33, Army Lessons Learned Program (Washington DC: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 2006), 10.

[152] Doing a search on CALL produces mostly operational and tactical lessens learned and does not produced institutional lessons learned.

[153] Battle Command Knowledge System (BCKS) Handbook for Building a Professional Forum v.2 ed. Michele Costanza (2006), 5.

[154] Ibid, 5-6

[155] Ibid, 6- 13.

merely peer groups provides the Army a mechanism to incorporate a dialogue between junior and senior officers.

Limitations in the Army to dialogue

In order to achieve a level of dialogue within the profession that can restore the lost trust, there are some limitations that the profession must address in order to do so. These limitations are ingrained cultural norms and stymie the process necessary to effectively engage in dialogue. Overcoming these limitations is arguably an arduous task, but a necessary one for the cultivation and restoration of trust.

The military culture within the profession is characterized as one in which career aspirations are more important than professional dissent.[156] This has the potential to cause officers to remain quiet in their dissent to elected or appointed civilian officials and summarily follow orders even when these orders run counter to the officer's professional judgment.[157] This culture in which the preservation of one's military career outweighs the risk of professional dissent leads to a profession that is out of touch with the values of the society in which it serves. This self-preservation attitude stems from the belief that speaking up with bad news or more problematic, alternate and creative ideas for the betterment of the organization to a superior would not produce favorable results.[158] And even when officers have made recommendations to their superiors, they have felt these recommendations were largely ignored and eventually stopped making them.[159] Putting self interests before the service to the nation causes the profession to be a collection of individuals instead a cohesive and collaborative group. Individualism thwarts dialogue.

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[156] Richard A. Gabriel, *To Serve with Honor* (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1982), 203.

[157] Ibid, 177-178.

[158] Detert, 23-24.

[159] Tilghman, Andrew "The Army's Other Crisis", Washington Monthly, DEC 2007.

The military culture also embodies a zero-defect mentality. This cultural characteristic, which is a common theme from the 1970s to the current culture, leads officers to "cover up" bad news and potentially falsify reports as opposed to addressing it.[160] This further fuels the lack of trust prevalent within the profession. The fear of mistakes and failures causes a climate of risk and uncertainty aversion. This aversion to risk increases as an officer moves higher in rank and power. Once displayed at the senior level, it is affirmed as the expected behavior at lower levels.[161] Careerism, a zero-defect focus, and the accompanying micromanagement combined with the attitude of not accepting defeat and not quitting until achieving mission success further characterizes the military culture[162] and is explicitly opposed to vulnerability. This vulnerability is necessary to conduct dialogue, to build trust, and forms a limitation to establishing dialogue.

Time is also a limitation to dialogue. Time is a finite commodity especially for an over-tasked Army. The management of time is therefore a crucial leadership role in the Army. One must be able to accomplish essential task without neglecting assigned tasks. In order to ensure compliance to assigned missions, often some essential tasks may remain unaccomplished if it does not immediately affect the assigned tasks. And when these essential tasks are encouraged but not required, they will go lower on the priority list. Indeed the short term gains from dialogue are not readily attributable and thus ignored even though the long term effects for trust through dialogue are immensely important. In order to incorporate dialogue into the hectic schedules of Army officers, junior and senior alike requires the elimination of some other activity. Yet it is hard to justify doing so when the perception is that every activity is required to prepare a unit for an impending deployment based on the current pace of operations

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[160] Steele, 6-10

[161] Robert T. Ault, "Encouraging Risk and Embracing Uncertainty, the Need to Change U.S. Army Culture", (monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, 2003), 11.

[162] Maureen A. Molz, "Breaking Boundaries: integrating Military and Technological Cultures to Enable Transformation" (strategic research project, U.S Army War College 2007), 7.

Responsibility for Implementing Dialogue

In order to implement dialogue, the profession as a whole must commit itself to this endeavor. It is easy to pin the responsibility on the senior leader, particularly due to the hierarchical bureaucracy of the profession. While it is true that changes that will allow the profession to overcome the limitations listed above will require action from the senior leaders at the strategic decision making level of the profession, it is not their responsibility alone. Officers at all levels must have the willingness to engage in dialogue in order for it to be a success.[163] Strategy must be supported by the highest leaders and understood and supported throughout an organization in order for it to be successful.[164] But the roles of junior and senior officers will be different.

Senior officers not only have to provide the opportunity for dialogue but must foster a climate that encourages and requires dialogue. An important responsibility of senior leaders is that of achieving cognitive consensuality.[165] If the avenues for dissent and discussion are blocked, the ability to foster a trusting relationship with junior leaders likewise will be impeded. The senior leader must reach out to junior officers and ensure that lasting positive relationships are formed and maintained throughout the junior officers' careers. Senior leaders must also demonstrate positive, trust-building activities and shun and immediately and overtly admonish activities that erode trust. When these activities occur, senior officers must quickly and adequately address the issues in a non-threatening manner with junior officers. This allows the senior leaders to reinforce the positive trust-building activities while minimizing the effects of the trust-eroding activities.

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[163] Senge, 245

[164] Fremont E. Kast and James E. Rosenzweig, Organization and Management: A Systems and Contingency Approach (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1979), 429.

[165] Boal, 424.

While another role of senior leaders in an organization is the developing of the next generation of leaders[166], junior officers must not simply rely on the senior officers for professional development, but must aggressively seek self-development. As such, they must take matters into their own hands by actively and aggressively seeking to engage in dialogue. This involves not only seeking senior leaders for the development of interpersonal and informal relationships but also doing so with peers and subordinates. Junior officers must realize their contribution to the profession and seek improvement in order to improve the organization. They can not allow the trust-eroding activities to spoil the positive trust building relationships from forging ahead into the future and dominating their psyche.

For both junior and senior officers, there must be an earnest attempt to improve ones emotional intelligence. Daniel Goleman describes emotional intelligence as "the ability to manage ourselves and our relationships effectively."[167] Goleman lists four capabilities that together comprise emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and social skill (or relationship management).[168] The essence of emotional intelligence is understanding and appreciating ones strengths and weaknesses and how the manifestations of these strengths and weaknesses affects ones peers, superiors and subordinates. Emotional intelligence also involves allowing this knowledge to drive one toward closer interpersonal relationships, organizational awareness, and improved communicating skills while showing a willingness to change in order to do so.[169] A concerted effort by every member of the military profession to improve his or her individual emotional intelligence can not help but drive the

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[166] Boal, 411

[167] Daniel Goleman, "Leadership That Gets Results", *Harvard Business Review* OnPoint Enhanced Edition. (2000): 80.

[168] Goleman, 80 and Daniel Goleman, Richard Boyatzis, and Annie McKee. "Primal Leadership: The Hidden Driver of Great Performance" *Harvard Business Review* OnPoint Enhanced Edition. (2000): 49.

[169] Goleman, "Primal Leadership", 80.

organization toward an environment that is characterized by increased dialogue as these traits are consistent with those required and facilitated through dialogue.

Conclusion

Trust is an important element for the military profession. It transcends every level and every group within the Army. Yet if it is such a dysfunctional element within the profession that it threatens to destroy the profession, why has the profession continued to thrive? One argument is that the cognitive element of trust makes it a soft and nebulous entity that is difficult if not impossible to truly measure. Based on this, the studies and surveys that indicate a problem with trust may not accurately reflect reality. This would contend that trust is not such a big problem and explains why the profession continues to thrive. However, Stephen M. R. Covey contends that trust is hard, quantifiable and measurable.[170]

An argument that the trust problem is real is the retention issue facing the profession. While one may argue that elements such as the number , duration, and frequency of deployments and broken relationships with senior leaders are the reasons for increased junior officer departures, this author posits that the underlying problem to all of the problems noted by the Schloesser research[171] can be summed up by unfulfilled expectations. This unfulfilled expectations leads to an erosion of trust.

If there is a trust problem that has essentially lingered since the 1970's, why has it not had more of an impact on the profession? The answer potentially lays in the motivations for becoming a member of the profession that echoes throughout many generations of officers – service and commitment to something higher that oneself. Dr. Keith wrote the "Paradoxical Commandments" in 1957. These commandments are as follows:

1. People are illogical, unreasonable and self-centered. Love them anyway.

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[170] Stephen M. R. Covey, *The Speed of Trust*. (New York: Free Press, 2006), 24.

2. If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish ulterior motives. Do good anyway.
3. If you are successful, you win false friends and true enemies. Succeed anyway.
4. The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. Do good anyway.
5. Honesty and frankness will make you vulnerable. Be honest and frank anyway.
6. The biggest men with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest men with the smallest minds. Think big anyway.
7. People favor underdogs, but follow only the top dogs. Fight for a few underdogs anyway.
8. What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. Build anyway.
9. People really need help but may attack you if you do help them. Help them anyway.
10. Give the world the best you have and you'll get kicked in the teeth. Give the world the best you have anyway.[172]

These commandments essentially tell the leader to do what is right, fair and just, even if others fail to reciprocate or acknowledge the actions.

Dr. Keith conducted a survey of the sources of meaning at work for a brigade of the 25th Infantry Division. The results of this survey matched a similar survey conducted at the School of Advanced Military Studies[173] and showed that the members of the profession are generally motivated by the success of others and the organization more than individual successes or failures. This leads one to believe that members of the profession hold the commandments as their guidelines for action. This means that the real or perceived lack of trust in the profession does not dissuade them for continue to strive for excellence.

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[171] Schloesser, 67-79.

[172] Kent Keith, "The Paradoxical Commandments", retrieved from http://www.paradoxicalcommandments.com/origin.html (accessed 24 February, 2008)

[173] Kent Keith gave a presentation to the School of Advanced Military Studies on February 19, 2008 on the virtues of servant leadership. During this presentation, participants were given the results of the 25th Infantry Division survey on the sources of meaning at work, took the same survey and discussed the results in small groups. Keith also presented the Paradoxical Commandments to participants at this time.

This servant leadership does not negate the need to reverse the trend of at least the perception of trust gaps within the profession. As mentioned earlier, the future of the profession rests not with the current leaders but with the Millennials who will inherit the problems of today. The collaborative nature of the Millennials indicates that this generation values relationships. They learn best from participative leaders who engage participants and are accustomed to engaging and participating in decisions.[174] This is highly consistent with the benefits and desired outcomes of dialogue. Through dialogue, the trust issues of today and the enriching leadership environment desired for the profession in the future can be achieved. Current members of the profession must continue to strive toward an environment and culture that is conducive to dialogue. And while remembering the Paradoxical Commandments and forgetting the negativity that hinders such pursuit, must do good anyway.

[174] Lancaster, 231.

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